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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001966

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, NEA/NGA, EUR/SE, PMAT, AND L; OSD FOR ISA, ISP
AND LEGAL; JCS FOR J3, J5 AND LEGAL; EUCOM FOR GEN. WALD,
J3, J4, J5, POLAD; CENTCOM FOR J3, J5 AND POLAD;

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: TGS CHIEF OF STAFF ISSUES STATEMENT ON TU
PRESENCE IN NORTHERN IRAQ

(u) Classified by Ambassador W. Robert Pearson. Reasons:
1.5 (B and D)

1. (C) On March 26, Turkish General Staff CHOD General Hilmi Ozkok issued a public statement on the current presence of TU forces in northern Iraq and future Turkish intentions in the region.

2. (U) Following are excerpts of the statement (a complete English-language text will follow septel):

--Certain elements of the Turkish Armed Forces are currently in northern Iraq;

--Turkish forces are not planning to intervene in the region unless there is an attack against Turkish forces there, unless there is a refugee influx, unless one of the groups in the region attacks the other, or unless the civilian population is attacked.

--Turkish forces are not planning to send additional forces to northern Iraq;

--The United States is currently waging a war in the region, and when we (the Turks) send units there (northern Iraq), coordination will be conducted;

--Turkish forces do not intend to fight or to invade;

--Turkish forces are not there (northern Iraq) permanently; and,

--Turkish forces will not engage in clashes in the region other than in order to defend themselves.

3. (U) Ozkok also expressed concern about what he described as the "suspicious attitudes" of certain institutions, international organizations, and certain allied countries regarding Turkey's position, including criticism leveled by foreign countries who feel threatened by the efforts of the Turkish forces, who are making preparations because of the developments in northern Iraq.

4. (C) Comment: Ozkok's statement stands on its own. Seeking further elaboration at this time could expose divisions within TGS or with the GOT. We recommend that the USG refrain from asking the Turks to elaborate on Ozkok's statement before SPE Khalilzad returns to Ankara for his March 29 meetings with the Turks.

5. (U) Amb. Khalilzad has cleared this message.
PEARSON